<u>REMARKS</u>

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated September 12, 2008, in which claims 1, 4-18 and 20 were rejected. This Amendment is also in response to interviews with the Examiner on November 5, 2008, and November 19, 2008. With this Amendment, claims 1, 5, 7, 12, 13 and 18 have been amended and the remaining claims are unchanged. No new matter has been added as a result of the claim amendments. Claims 2-3, 19 and 21-23 were previously canceled. The specification has been amended to correct a typographical error. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims in view of the above-amendments and the following remarks.

I.        <u>SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW HELD ON NOVEMBER 5, 2008</u>

During the interview on November 5, 2008, which included the Examiner, Primary Examiner Hung Vy, inventor Geoffrey Schlueter and the undersigned, differences between the claimed invention and Bedell et al. (US Patent No. 6,996,568) were discussed. Specifically, differences between independent claim 1 and Bedell were pointed out by the inventor and the undersigned. The Examiner indicated that the differences discussed were not adequately specified in claim 1. No agreement was reached. The Examiner agreed to have another interview to discuss specific proposed amendments.

II.        <u>SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2008</u>

During the interview on November 19, 2008, which included the Examiner, Primary Examiner Hung Vy and the undersigned, proposed claim amendments substantially similar to those included above were discussed. Differences between Bedell et al. (US Patent No. 6,996,568) and amended claim 1 were primarily discussed. Specifically, newly added features regarding the interface of claim 1, such as the relationship between interface options and the columns of the staging table, were discussed. No final agreement regarding the claim language was reached.

III.        <u>CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112</u>

In section 6 of the Office Action, claims 8-10 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and

distinctly claim the subject matter which applicants regard as the invention. Specifically, the Office Action points out that claims 8 and 13 recite the limitation "the account staging table," for which there is insufficient antecedent basis. Claims 9-10 were rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of claim 8 and claims 14-15 were rejected as incorporating the deficiencies of claim 13. With this Amendment, all claims that include the limitation "account balance staging table" have been amended to include "account staging table." Thus, amended claim 7, from which claim 8 depends, includes "account staging table." Similarly, claim 12, from which claim 13 depends, now includes "account staging table." Thus, the rejection should be withdrawn.

IV.        CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103

In Section 9 of the Office Action, claims 1, 4-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bedell, U.S. Publ. No. 6,996,568 in view of Thompson et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,668,253.

With this Amendment, independent claims 1 and 18 have been amended to clarify that the staging table has a standardized structure, which is independent of business rules of the general ledger database. Also, claims 1 and 18 have been amended to point out that the uniform interface has a set of defined options and that columns in the at least one staging table are related to the set of defined options of the uniform interface. Support for these amendments can be found, for example, on page 13, lines 1-2, of the specification and on page 16, lines 15-29, of the specification.

Claim 1 includes "a uniform interface, having a set of defined options, configured to receive a generalized request from a report object and, based upon information included in the generalized request, access data from a general ledger database and return the accessed data to the report object, . . . wherein at least one staging table, having a standardized structure which is independent of business rules of the general ledger database, is utilized by the uniform interface to store at least a portion of the accessed data . . . , and wherein columns in the at least one staging table are related to the set of defined options of the uniform interface."

Bedell mentions an alternative join method may be using temporary tables or correlated sub-query techniques. However, Bedell does not teach, or explicitly or impliedly

suggest, anything about a uniform interface, having a set of defined options, using at least one staging table having a standardized structure which is independent of business rules of the general ledger database, wherein columns in the at least one staging table are related to the set of defined options of the uniform interface. Thompson does not make up for the deficiencies of Bedell. Thus, claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the cited art.

Independent claim 18 includes elements similar to those included in independent claim 1. Thus, claim 18 is believed to be allowable for the same reasons as those provided in connection with claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that the dependent claims are also allowable at least by virtue of their dependency, either directly or indirectly, from the allowable independent claims. Further, Applicants note that the dependent claims include numerous elements which are not shown or suggested by the Bedell and Thompson references.

For example, independent claim 8 includes "the specific query, into which the generalized request is translated by the uniform interface, comprises a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column is retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement." The Office Action suggests that column 31, lines 35-60, of Thompson show these elements. Column 31, lines 35-60, of Thompson are as follows:

> The first access mechanism uses the MicroStrategy's DSS Server tool set. This tool set, embedded within the EIM solution, dynamically generates the SQL statements necessary to query the database for the requested information. It does this by first reading a metadata repository which cross-references the information that the query user is requesting with the actual tables and columns in the data warehouse. If necessary, several SQL queries are created and run against the warehouse and the result sets from those queries are combined and presented to the user as one unified information result. The data that is returned in these queries is always be the latest and most up to date information available. However, because the data warehouse is updated on an infrequent basis (see the Database Update Process section elsewhere in this document), once the results from the query have been obtained they are stored within a data cache. Subsequent requests for the same information retrieve the results from the cache rather than creating and executing SQL against the data warehouse. This

greatly improves response time for query. While the System Administrator can configure the frequency with which the cache is emptied, it is expected that most installations will use the default of scheduling it in conjunction with the warehouse update process. The data cache can be configured to store the results in text files on a file server, in memory (less efficient), or even in a database separate from the warehouse.

The above section of Thompson does not even remotely suggest anything about "a single sequential query language (SQL) statement that joins the account staging table with a balance table of the general ledger database, such that balance information for an entire report column is retrieved by execution of the single SQL statement."

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims 1, 4-18 and 20. Favorable action upon all claims is solicited.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,
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